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General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 70/31 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-first session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 15 February 2016 a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[27 May 2016]

Argentina has traditionally advocated a comprehensive approach to actions and initiatives in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms regulation. These are areas where Argentina has been actively involved at the regional and global levels in defending the role of multilateralism in general, and of the United Nations in particular, in addressing the multifaceted challenges of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Argentina believes that the best way to promote multilateral disarmament and revitalize existing disarmament bodies while defending national interests is to embark upon substantive negotiations on the various issues on the agenda, within the framework of existing bodies, which are the best place to articulate national security stances. Argentina has, therefore, actively promoted confidence-building measures, especially in the area of conventional weapons. It is committed to contributing to international peace and security through transparent participation in the international community's collective efforts in the firm belief that greater openness and transparency regarding arms will build confidence, promote stability, help States to moderate their transfer policies, and strengthen peace.

That being so, Argentina has been actively involved in, inter alia, the negotiations over the Arms Trade Treaty, the establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms, and meetings on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, considering that international stability cannot be based solely on national controls and that these instruments contribute to peace and security. The emphasis that Argentina has placed on strengthening these mechanisms is part of its broader commitment over recent decades to the development, implementation and strengthening of subregional, regional and global confidence-building measures.

Argentina is also irrevocably committed to non-proliferation and, to date, is the only Latin American country that is a party to the five export control regimes (Australia Group, Zangger Committee, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar

Arrangement and Missile Technology Control Regime). Argentina has served two consecutive terms as Chair of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (2014-15 and 2015-16).

In 2016, Argentina has been taking part in the meetings of the open-ended working group established through General Assembly resolution 70/33 to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. Argentina voted in favour of the resolution, and its participation is guided by its interest in promoting and contributing positively to the advancement of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[1 June 2016]

Chile believes that the responsibility for maintaining international security lies with collective bodies rather than unilateral responses that could undermine the legal foundations of international coexistence. Accordingly, Chile considers it of the utmost importance to continue to move forward in arms regulation, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament on the basis of universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent negotiations with the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

Driven by its belief in broad, transparent and democratic multilateralism, Chile supported the establishment of the open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, created pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/56.

Similarly, our country voted in favour of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/32, in which 26 September was declared the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Alongside various civil society actors, a number of activities were carried out to commemorate the day and to demonstrate the importance of the total elimination of such weapons and their impact on humanity. Furthermore, Chile will continue to promote the creation of new forums and processes for the discussion of threats to global stability. In that spirit, Chile supported the humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament, an initiative which seeks to inculcate, in world opinion, not only a clear notion of the horrendous humanitarian consequences of using atomic weapons, but also the radical incompatibility between these weapons and the basic principles of international humanitarian law.

In addition to the above, and within the framework of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons), Chile supports the establishment of the open-ended group of governmental experts, who will prepare recommendations for regulating so-called lethal autonomous weapons systems which, owing to their lack of regulation, endanger important principles of international humanitarian law.

Finally, we will continue to support the work being carried out under the aegis of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2016]

The need to peacefully resolve existing international disputes underscores the importance of multilateralism in addressing potential threats in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The stalemate in the negotiations within the multilateral disarmament machinery, which has persisted for several years and which stems from the lack of political will on the part of certain countries, makes it all the more necessary to intensify multilateral efforts.

The multilateral efforts made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries include, notably, the promotion of nuclear disarmament and the proposal, endorsed by the General Assembly, to start, as a matter of urgency, negotiations on the prompt conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention on the prohibition of the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

The goals of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation cannot be achieved through unilateral measures.

On the pretext of alleged threats to national security, some States promote and execute unilateral actions, some of which are related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. These unilateral measures pose a threat to international peace and security, undermine multilateralism and multilateral agreements, and erode confidence in the international system and in the very foundations of the United Nations.

In terms of scope and weight, unilateral measures and bilateral and regional agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation are no substitute for agreements reached through multilateral negotiations. Multilateralism must be the core principle of all negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

As a State Member of the United Nations and a State party to many treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism. The multilateral decision-making process conducted through the United Nations, in strict observance of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, is the only effective way of safeguarding international peace and security.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[11 April 2016]

Lebanon supports the adoption of effective measures to counter the threat to international security and peace posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It supports disarmament and arms regulation agreements resulting from multilateral negotiations with the participation of a large number of countries, regardless of their size and power, with the goal of reaching complete disarmament under strict international control. It believes that the promotion of multilateralism is an essential means for advancing negotiations and establishing universal norms with

broader scope. It remains committed to multilateral cooperation because such cooperation is an important means of pursuing and achieving common objectives in relation to disarmament and non-proliferation. Meanwhile, Israel's maintenance of an enormous arsenal of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a direct threat not only to Lebanon but to all States in the region, even endangering international peace and security.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2016]

As noted in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, nuclear disarmament concerns all States Members of the United Nations, and it has been the subject of multilateral discussions since the General Assembly adopted its first resolution.

Mexico is known for its tireless efforts and keen activism in pursuit of the prohibition and complete elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with its foreign policy principles and the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations. Thus, in 2015, in its belief that multilateralism is the best way to maintain international peace and security, Mexico continued to undertake multilateral activities at the national and international levels to promote disarmament and non-proliferation. Those activities included:

- Active participation in multilateral forums aimed at the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, with a view to maintaining and sustaining a world free of this scourge;
- Promotion of full compliance with and the universality and entry into force of international treaties on chemical, biological and nuclear disarmament, and participation in the meetings under each of those instruments;
- Voluntary submission of its reports pursuant to those instruments, and cooperation in various spheres with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- Presentation to the First Committee at the seventieth session of the General Assembly of six draft resolutions aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, in particular resolution 70/33 entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", which establishes an open-ended working group whose mandate is to substantively address new legal norms and measures on nuclear disarmament. Mexico has participated actively and proactively in the meetings of this group in 2016;
- Promotion since 2012 of the Humanitarian Initiative, which emerged as an alternative mechanism in response to the frustration of non-nuclear-States and civil society at the lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament;
- Participation in the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission, the open-ended working group to consider the objectives and agenda for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and the fourth Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington, D.C. in 2016.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]
[3 June 2015]

Paraguay is a party to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials, adopted in November 1997. The Convention establishes the need for export, import and transit licences for firearms and for stronger controls at export points; promotes and encourages cooperation and the exchange of information and experience among States; and provides for a Consultative Committee to ensure its implementation, to promote the exchange of information, to encourage cooperation and to promote training.

Paraguay is a party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and a State member of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Treaty was the first legally binding instrument to prohibit the testing, use, manufacture, production or acquisition by any means whatsoever of any nuclear weapons, and their receipt, storage, installation, deployment and any form of possession.

Paraguay is also a party to the Arms Trade Treaty, adopted by Act No. 5398 of February 2015, whose instrument of ratification was deposited in April 2015. The First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty was held in Cancún, Mexico, in August 2015. The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) plans to develop the Arms Trade Treaty coordination and implementation mechanisms. At the Cancún Conference, Paraguay made a national statement in which it reaffirmed its wish to continue to support the Treaty and to comply with relevant domestic regulations, called for the progressive universalization of the Treaty, and advocated joint efforts.

Within MERCOSUR, the goal of the Working Group on Firearms and Ammunition is to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in arms. In the Working Group, the States parties and associated States coordinate positions and policies and seek to harmonize their domestic legislation. In its capacity as President Pro Tempore of MERCOSUR, Paraguay hosted the twenty-seventh meeting of the Working Group and the eighth meeting of the technical subgroup in November 2014. In this connection, Paraguay is focusing on strengthening the control of transfers of arms; marking and tracing; and the regulation of brokering, especially across borders, and places great stock in the role of international cooperation and support for joint efforts and the establishment of a mechanism to build confidence among States and cooperating entities.

Portugal

[Original: English]
[31 May 2016]

Portugal believes that multilateralism is the most efficient way to attain the objective of peace and security maintenance at an international level, through disarmament and non-proliferation. In this issue, Portugal is party to the most relevant treaties and other international and regional mechanisms regarding the prevention and elimination of threats represented by the proliferation of weapons of

mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Portugal also cooperates with international organizations that work in those areas.

Among the mechanisms mentioned above, we note the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BTWC); the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare; the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its Protocols (including amendments) (CCW); the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC); the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM); the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (Convention of Ottawa); the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the Convention on Nuclear Safety; and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), and its Amendment. Portugal is party to all these instruments.

Portugal also participates in the following export control regimes: the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia Group (AG), the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Zangger Committee and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Portugal has participated in outreach activities which aim to promote the universalization of the main treaties and other legal instruments regarding disarmament and non-proliferation, especially with the Portuguese-Speaking Countries, through formal and informal contacts and initiatives such as seminars, workshops and meetings.

Following the efforts in the area of disarmament, at a multilateral level, Portugal was one of the first 50 States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which is the first disarmament legal instrument adopted by the United Nations in the last decade.

In matters concerning nuclear disarmament, Portugal recognizes the risk represented by those countries that possess and seek to develop nuclear weapons, especially in regions that are politically and socially unstable, which represent a higher threatening potential.

Portugal aligns with the policies of its European partners, namely, supporting the dialogue between 5+5. In matters concerning nuclear disarmament, Portugal sustains the full implementation of the NPT, always considering the importance of the existence of confidence-building measures among nuclear and non-nuclear States.

Portugal also hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will adopt, as soon as possible, a programme of work supporting the negotiation of the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). To this end, Portugal highlights the importance of the implementation of the 2010 NPT action plan, in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and believes that the effective implementation of that action plan includes ending the stalemate of the Conference on Disarmament. Portugal also signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and has proceeded with outreach activities regarding its universalization.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[8 July 2016]

Spain is committed to the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament system; it has signed all the international agreements constituting the legal and normative framework of that system, and maintains an active, ambitious and consistent policy in support of its effectiveness and with the clear objective of achieving the universality of the major treaties in this area. Spain is also promoting the universality and full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) through its chairmanship of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the biennium 2015-2016.

Furthermore, Spain is highly involved in the promotion of peace processes and in revitalizing and bringing innovation to the multilateral system with a view to transforming it into an instrument for peace, stability, advancement and progress. To that end, it will be necessary to:

- Seek comprehensive political solutions that prevent, deter or stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.
- Integrate policy on non-proliferation and disarmament into general security policy.
- Consider the possibility of including "non-proliferation clauses" in bilateral and regional relations.
- Promote the universality, defence and strengthening of international treaties, conventions, agreements and regimes.
- Strengthen the role of the United Nations Security Council.
- Promote the national implementation of international obligations.
- Improve the effectiveness of verification mechanisms through political, economic and technical support.
- Strengthen import and export control systems relating to defence and dual-use materials.
- Strengthen control measures for intangible transfers of technology.
- Promote international information exchange.
- Strengthen technical assistance among States and cooperation for development.
- Promote legal and responsible trade in defence materials and dual-use technologies, and prevent illicit trafficking.
- Facilitate collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industries that share the same objective.

Only an effective multilateral system can successfully tackle the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in combination with other phenomena such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, failed States and regional conflicts.

The election of Spain as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the principal organ of the Organization entrusted under the Charter of the United Nations with primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, reflects the international community's recognition of the important role Spain plays in the world and the country's commitment to multilateralism and to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Turkmenistan

[Original: Russian]
[23 June 2016]

Neutrality is the foundation of Turkmenistan's domestic and foreign policy, based on the close relationship between national interests, global security and shared progress. A key element for Turkmenistan, arising from its neutral status and international obligations, is the peace-loving nature of its foreign policy. Accordingly, all matters are addressed exclusively through political and diplomatic channels, primarily the United Nations and other international organizations. Turkmenistan fully supports international efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related technologies, and it advocates disarmament as a prerequisite for global security. In its legislation, Turkmenistan proclaims its refusal to possess, manufacture, store or transport nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass destruction, including new types of such weapons or technologies for their production.

Turkmenistan has acceded to a number of international disarmament instruments whose main purpose is to encourage States parties to maintain global peace, harmony and security.

Attaching particular importance to strengthening international peace and security, Turkmenistan calls for a reduction in the number of arms in the belief that the fewer weapons there are in the world, the steadier and calmer its development will be and the greater the trust and understanding among countries and peoples. Turkmenistan's foreign policy framework document for 2013 to 2017 emphasizes that Turkmenistan will continue to actively promote disarmament processes and the reduction of weapons arsenals, primarily weapons of mass destruction.

In his speech at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on 5 June 2015, the President of Turkmenistan drew special attention to our country's international obligations to the global community. He emphasized that neutrality means non-adherence to political, economic or military unions and blocs; having our own army with sufficient troop strength to protect the nation's peace and freedom; rejecting weapons of mass destruction and prohibiting such weapons from entering our national territory and air space; committing to universal human values and democratic principles, and safeguarding civic harmony and peace within the country; and conducting domestic and foreign policy in close cooperation with the United Nations and humanitarian international organizations.

At the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly on 3 June 2015, resolution 69/285 on the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan was unanimously adopted by 193 States. This clearly illustrates the universal recognition of our country's effective policy to safeguard regional and international peace, security and sustainable development. The resolution underscores the important contribution of

permanent neutrality in Turkmenistan to the strengthening of peace and security in the region, and to the development of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with the countries of the world.

As the host country of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, Turkmenistan calls for that body to be more engaged in various aspects of regional issues with the support of States Members of the United Nations and other organizations (including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States).

An international forum on safeguarding peace, stability and security in the Central Asian region was successfully held in Ashgabat in 2015. As a party to international treaties, United Nations conventions and multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament, Turkmenistan intends to continue to do its utmost to facilitate these processes, first and foremost at the regional level, and aims for Turkmenistan to hold regular regional meetings on disarmament issues in Central Asia.